

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

Boise, Idaho

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News

My trip to the 1998 convention of the American Numismatic Association in Portland was quite nice. I took a day to drive to Eugene, then spent most of a day at the University of Oregon's Knight Library doing research on the issuer of an Idaho token. Hopefully I will be able to put together a major article on this business in the near future. It was great being able to e-mail ahead to get permission to look at the archives, then have the library staff already have the material pulled out and waiting for me when I arrived. They even scanned some photographs for me and them on compact disc.

The next day at Portland, I presented a proposal to "Put TAMS on the Internet" to the Board of Governors of the Token and Medal Society. They were enthusiastic about the plan and gave the go-ahead to start with a "home page". When I returned home, I found that my daughters had discovered an outfit on the Internet that offers free web pages, and they had each taken advantage of the offer. So I had them build the TAMS prototype which you are welcome to see at: <http://www.angelfire.com/id/TAMS/index.html>. Check it out. Ultimately, the TAMS maverick database should be available to be searched by all, plus a number of other features of interest to the token hobby.

At the TAMS banquet, I was surprised to be honored with a plaque recognizing me for having put out the TAMS Maverick column for a number of years. Then, my ticket was drawn first for the door prizes, so I took home a copy of Paul Cunningham's Volume 1 of Military Tokens of the United States. He just released a companion volume for overseas issues.

I saw Idaho token collectors Dick Magnuson, Jim Mabry, and Mr. and Mrs. Hal Dun at the various ANA and TAMS functions, and spent an enjoyable and educational evening with the Mabrys. There were possibly other Idaho tokens collectors at the ANA, but, if so, I missed them. I wandered around the Portland area visiting coin, antique, and book stores, but only brought a few pieces home with me. Nonetheless, it was a great week. I understand that the "midwinter" ANA National Money Show will be in Sacramento, CA March 12-14, 1999 in connection with the 150th anniversary of the California Gold Rush.

Then, the union representing U S WEST occupational employees went on strike August 16, so I spent the next two weeks working 12 to 16 hours per day, 7 days per week. When they settled and returned to work, the catching up began, so the long days continued. It is now the second week in September and things are getting back to normal. I have had a few days off, but they were mostly spent sleeping and doing chores around the house. Thanks for understanding the delay in getting out this issue of the Newsletter.

Old stamps

Several of you have asked where I get the old stamps. There's an outfit in Portland, OR, Unique Estate Appraisals, which sells them at a discount via the Internet. Check out <http://www.stampsandcoins.com> for details and prices.

business in September of 1902 under the name of Skalet and Shell. In 1908 O. O. Skalet took control of the business and it became known as the O. O. Skalet Mercantile Co. by 1909.

Ole Skalet married Kate Parry in September of 1908. They had 5 children, raising 4 to adulthood. They built a home on East Main Street in St. Anthony which included a small office for Ole who was also becoming involved in the real estate business. The mercantile business was very successful and in February of 1914, Stephen F. Gilman arrived from Wenatchee, Washington, having purchased an interest in the mercantile business. Gilman took over as the manager leaving Ole more time to devote to his growing real estate business. By 1915 the business was known as Skalet & Gilman, remaining under that name until 1921.



The O. O. Skalet tokens known are from the 1909 to 1915 time period. They are catalogued as #STAN-11 with four varieties known. The G counterstamp probably indicates that those pieces were redeemed by Skalet & Gilman when Gilman entered the concern.

O. O. SKALET, / ST. ANTHONY, / IDAHO // GOOD FOR / 100 / IN / MERCHANDISE 38mm rd al [4 known, all with a G counterstamp on the obverse]

[A] O. O. SKALET, / ST. ANTHONY, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / 50 / IN / MERCHANDISE 30mm rd al [2 known, each with a G counterstamp on the obverse]

[B] O. O. SKALET, / ST. ANTHONY, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / 25 / IN / MERCHANDISE 27mm rd al [2 known, each with a G counterstamp on the obverse]

[C] O. O. SKALET, / ST. ANTHONY, / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / 10 / IN / MERCHANDISE 24mm rd al [5 known, three with a G counterstamp on the obverse]

The 10¢ variety is the only denomination of the Skalet & Gilman token known. Interestingly, no 5¢ pieces are known. As the 10¢ O. O. Skalet token is the only one not known counterstamped, this may indicate that the 10¢ denomination was the most used and the business got by with the older tokens, but had to order additional 10¢ ones to conduct business.

SKALET & GILMAN / ST. / ANTHONY, / S. L. / STAMP / CO. / IDAHO. // GOOD FOR / 10¢ / IN / MERCHANDISE / AT RETAIL 25mm rd al [4 known]

The July 20th, 1921 Fremont News has an article under the headline "Skalet & Gilman sell store to the Swing Co." This article notes that the Swing Co. is a corporation from Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and that D. T. Swing, who is the president of the corporation has moved to St.

Anthony to be the resident manager. The article also notes that Mr. Skalet will retain ownership of the building and that the Swing Co. has only purchased the stock and fixtures.



Mr. Skalet, it is noted, will remain in St. Anthony to pursue his other interests but notes that the future plans of Mr. Gilman are unknown.

There are two known varieties of the Swing Company tokens, catalogued as #STAN-24. Each is known in only one example.

THE / SWING CO. / ST. ANTHONY / IDAHO // GOOD FOR / 5¢ / IN TRADE 26mm rd br
 [A] THE / SWING CO. / ST. ANTHONY / IDAHO // GOOD FOR / 25¢ / IN TRADE 23mm
 s4 br

**Our Great
Reorganization Sale**

**Is in Full Swing and Will
Continue All Next Week**

During this first week crowds have thronged the
 aisles of this store. Many lines are fast being closed
 out but still there is much to be sold. The stock
 must be entirely re-organized.

Next week our buyers will have for gutters, and one sign
 much more than could be sold for the same amount.

**Remember the Closing Date Has Been Postponed and
 All Quotations Will be Good Until Sat. Night, Aug. 6th**

REORGANIZATION SPECIALS FROM
 OVER THE STORE

The Swing Company

Successors to Skalet & Gilman
 St. Anthony, Idaho

The Swing Co. began an aggressive advertising campaign in the local papers and apparently did quite well for a few years. They remained in the Skalet building until 1927 when they moved a block south into part of the Idaho First National Bank building having a formal opening in their new location on February 14, 1927.

O. O. Skalet decided to go back into the mercantile business and the January 27th, 1927 **Teton Peak Chronicle** states that "O. O. Skalet is again back in his old store quarters, recently vacated by the Swing Co."

The Swing Company remained in business until 1933 when Mr. Swing disposed of his assets in St. Anthony and moved to Walla Walla, Washington.

The O. O. Skalet Department Store, as it was known, remained in business until 1936. He remained involved in local real estate and insurance for a number of years after that. When his oldest son, Herbert, who was the Prosecuting Attorney for Fremont County,

drowned in 1945, Ole seemed to lose interest in business. He died in St. Anthony in 1949 at the age of 85 and is buried in the Riverview Cemetery in St. Anthony along side his wife Kate.

The original Skalet building remains on the northeast corner of the North Bridge and East 1st North intersection in St. Anthony. Fremont Physical Therapy now has a business in the building. The Idaho First National Bank building still stands on the northeast corner of the Bridge and Main intersection in St. Anthony.

Another Hoo's Hoo

Who sells you pipes and smokes galore
 And then carts out a humidior?
 Who sells to merchants at wholesale
 And to consumer at retail?
 Whose billiard hall brings out the boys
 Who like to hear that clicking noise?
 Who is an old time dealer here
 And holds associations dear?
 He's known to most of you, I feel,
 So shake the mitt of one Jule Weil.



Cleaning Tokens using Electrolysis, by Dan Lute

Electrolysis or electrocleaning (EC) is a simple and amazing way to dissolve oxidation and discoloration from the surface of metal objects such as coins, tokens and larger items. The method is often used by professional archaeologists to restore items that are dug or recovered from shipwrecks. It is safe, simple, effective and inexpensive when used properly.

EC uses direct current, referred to as DC, for cleaning the objects. DC can be obtained from a storage battery such as flashlights and autos use or can be obtained from your regular household electrical system, which is normally 110 volt alternating current (AC), by using various types of AC/DC converters. Use of an AC/DC converter is the most desired method since you have a continuous power supply and don't have to worry about recharging or replacing worn out batteries.

When selecting a power supply there are various things to consider. First, it should operate at a maximum output voltage of around 10 volts DC when connected to your household outlet. Second, it should operate at reasonably low amperage. I have used two different converters that operated between 2.5 and 8.0 amps with good results. Beware of using high amp output devices DUE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ELECTRICAL SHOCK! Although the use of low amperage devices reduces the chance of serious shock, I always unplug or turn off the converter when hooking up the wire leads.

When looking for a converter there are many choices; I will list a few. Regular "electros" are available through coin and treasure hunting magazines. Cheaper and readily available other devices include calculator, radio and other electronic adapters that plug into 110 AC household current. One of the best choices is to use an old toy electric train transformer, which come in fixed and variable voltages. Most people have one of these items laying around the house or garage. I picked one up at a toy train show for \$2.00.

This cleaning process is the best way to clean the worst stains and corrosion from metals. It also has the advantage of being able to clean out nooks and crannies that are hard to get to with other methods. Any conductive metal can be cleaned with this process, however a few precautions should be noted. Brass tokens which contain variable percentages of copper and the other alloys consisting mainly of tin and zinc may have a tendency to discolor toward the copper side, which is more reddish. This is why it is not advisable to clean nickels with this process because it will turn them copper colored since they are basically 75% copper to begin with. A second precaution is that I haven't tried this on aluminum yet so take care.

Following is a list of materials you will need to collect to build the cleaner:

1. DC power supply
2. Large clear glass or plastic beaker (6-8 inches in diameter)
3. Stainless steel spoon
4. Two 3' wire leads, one red, one black
5. Two copper alligator clips
6. Common table salt (some people use baking soda)
7. Tap water
8. A sacrificial dirty crusty token

Next month I will finish the article and tell you how to build the cleaner and operate it without eating the token up or plating some undesirable metal on it.

Loose ends...

One thing about historical research: there are always lots of loose ends. I have notes from 25 or more years of researching tokens which are only partially organized. "Use your computer!" you say, but that requires a lot of typing and scanning. At least related notes can be grouped to make sense, so that is what I am doing as time allows. My higher priority is to get the Idaho token checklist to press, so if any of you can assist by contributing articles to this Newsletter, please do so.

My thanks to Dean Rasmussen for his work on researching businesses in his area! And now Dan Lute has taken the plunge. I know others have written articles for other publications, so if you have something of interest to readers of the **Idaho Trade Token Newsletter**, send it.

There is quite a bit of correspondence I need to catch up on, so please be patient.

Best regards,

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